

# The IDVA Update



Mitch Daniels - Governor  
Tom Applegate - Director

May 2009

The Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs Newsletter

Edition 2009-1

## Jon Brinkley, Long-time State Service Officer for IDVA. Passes Away

By Kris Bertrand,  
State Service Officer

Jon Brinkley, long-time State Service Officer passed away January 29, 2009 after a brave battle with Esophageal Cancer.



Jon came to IDVA 17 years ago and immediately fit in. Jon found his niche in life providing services to veterans in need. He became a fixture at the various veteran-related events throughout the state and was one of the driving forces behind the Indiana Korean War and Vietnam Veterans Memorials. He was one of the founding and charter members and President of Rolling Thunder Chapter #1. He was past director of the State of Indiana Rolling Thunder.

He was a sergeant in the U.S. Army in the Fourth Infantry Division. While in Vietnam Jon earned the Bronze Star with 'V' for Valor.

Jon was a cranky guy, but that's what endeared him to not only the agency, but to everyone who knew him.



He reminded me of Crankshaft from the comic strip of the same name. Sometimes I think the artist modeled Crankshaft's look after Jon.



*Jon's motorcycle sits in the center of the funeral home viewing room at Flanner & Buchannon during the memorial service.*

Marcia Hines called him 'a great friend, and I will miss him greatly.'

'Jon was dedicated to helping veterans, he went out of his way to help all veterans who came to him for help'. - Dean Slicer VA Regional Office.



'I knew Jon for 14 of the 17 years he worked for IDVA. As a CVSO, I knew when I called he would give me a straight answer. As his boss after I became Director, I knew I could count on 100% from him every day.' - Tom Applegate, Director IDVA.

Despite Jon's illness, he continued to come to work every day. He never once felt sorry for himself, or wondered aloud 'why me?'. I learned a lot from Jon, not just about veterans benefits, but I learned about perseverance, to never give up, to always put on a brave face even though I might be shaking in terror inside.

Jon's funeral was standing room only, there were so many people present, so many lives he touched. Jon left us too soon, and there are days when I have a WWJD (What Would Jon Do?) experience. I hope I can live up to his memory of what it is to serve others.

## Joint Resolution in Indiana House and Senate Honors Fallen Hoosiers

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Indiana's Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman speaks to families of fallen servicemembers in the Indiana State House Supreme Court Room Tuesday, March 24, 2009. Afterwards, a Joint Resolution was adopted in the House and later in the Senate recognizing the service and sacrifice of all Hoosiers who have given their life on the battlefield in the Global War on Terror. The names of each of the one hundred fifty three (153) casualties were read. Indiana National Guard photo by SPCWilliam E. Henry.

Story by the Indiana National Guard

INDIANAPOLIS (March 24, 2009) - Hundreds of family members of fallen Hoosiers filled the Indiana Supreme Court Room here, awaiting their turn to join the Indiana House of Representatives and Senate in passing a resolution honoring their loved ones.

"We welcome you and want to thank you. We don't know what it's like.

"We don't know how it feels. So it's important for us to put faces with the people who have lost loved ones," said Rep. Woody Burton.

When the time came, the loved ones of servicemembers killed during deployments stood on both floors and in the galleries of the Indiana General Assembly to witness the resolution make history.

"This is a very small show of our appreciation for those of you who have sacrificed so much," said Rep. Dale Grubb.

Both Burton and Grubb spearheaded the resolution for those Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines

who were killed in relation to all deployments, but the main focus of the resolution was on the more recent deployments during the Global War on Terror (GWOT).

Indiana Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. R. Martin Umbarger, was also on hand to show his support and represent the military branches.

"I represent the 12,000 Soldiers and 2,000 Airmen of the Indiana National Guard, but today I'm honored to represent all the branches of the Armed Forces," said Maj. Gen. Umbarger.

"I think some of us wondered if this generation would volunteer in a time of need like prior generations, like the greatest generation. Now we know. Now we know they would, and they do," he added.



Indiana Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. R. Martin Umbarger, speaks to families of fallen servicemembers at the Indiana State House Supreme Court Room Tuesday, March 24, 2009, before the Indiana General Assembly moved to adopt a joint resolution in the House and Senate which recognizes the service and sacrifice of all Hoosiers who have given their life on the battlefield since September 11, 2001. Indiana National Guard photo by Spc. William E. Henry



# NEW MUNCIE CBOC



Community-Based Outpatient Clinic located at 2600 White River Boulevard in Muncie.



IDVA Director, Tom Applegate (2nd from left) assists with cutting of the ribbon officially opening the clinic. Others pictured include (from Applegate), Tresa Baker from Congressman Burton's office; Kim Bennett from Representative Mike Pence's office; Barbara McLelland, Deputy Director, VISN-11; Delaware County VSO, Jerry Griffiths; NIHCS Director, Cathi Spivey-Paul; Muncie Mayor Sharon McShurley; Emmy Huffman, Senator Lugar's office, and; Andrew Homan, Senator Bayh's office.



Jerry Griffiths led the Pledge of Allegiance to open the ceremony on Tuesday afternoon, March 31, 2009.



Cathi Spivey-Paul, acting as emcee, made welcoming remarks, introduced guests, commented on all the work it's taken to get the clinic opened, and introduced the staff.



Attendees included Roger Peterman (wearing glasses and holding a rolled-up program), National Guard Transition Assistance Advisor; Emmy Huffman (to his left), from Senator Lugar's office, and; Colonel Mark Coers, Deputy Chief of Staff, Joint Forces Headquarters, Indiana National Guard.



## **New VA Outpatient Facility in South Bend**

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The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will open a new Expanded Service Health Care Center to serve local veterans in the South Bend area. This new facility will greatly improve care for local veterans. Veterans have had to travel long distances to get the care they deserve to have close to home.

Veterans in South Bend will receive a new 60,000 to 70,000 square foot outpatient facility, which will provide comprehensive examination services in cardiology, podiatry, outpatient surgery and other medical specialties, wellness programs and ultrasound exams. Special services will also be available for newly returning veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan. In addition, the VA gave approval to contract with local hospitals, such as St. Joseph Regional Medical Center and Memorial Hospital, to provide inpatient hospital care for area veterans.

"I am very pleased the veterans of Fort Wayne and South Bend will receive better services closer to their homes," said VA's Under Secretary for Health, Dr. Michael Kussman. "We feel that this is the right choice for Indiana Veterans."

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## **Veterans Day at the Indiana State Fair**

The Indiana State Fair will honor those who have proudly served our country with an Armed Forces and Veterans Day, Sunday August 16. All United States service men and women are admitted FREE if they show their military ID.

For a list of activities around the fairgrounds that day, please check their web site

<http://www.in.gov/statefair/fair/>



## **FORT WAYNE: New Outpatient Care Facility; Inpatient Care to Stay**

**FORT WAYNE, IN** – U.S. Rep. Mark Souder gathered April 4th with local veterans and officials from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to announce a victory for the veterans served at the VA hospital in Fort Wayne.

In 2004, the CARES Commission and the VA Department were prepared to shut down inpatient care in Fort Wayne and send local veterans (and their families) to Indianapolis, more than two hours away to receive treatment. At a meeting yesterday, Congressman Souder worked with VA Secretary Shinseki to finalize the details of over-turning the CARES Commission report.

"After years of consistent, hard work along with Hoosier vets throughout northeast Indiana, we have stopped the original CARES decision from being implemented," Souder said.

"I am pleased to announce this victory on behalf of our local veterans. Not only will we keep our inpatient services in Fort Wayne, but we will be able to greatly enhance the outpatient services available," Souder added.

"Our area is home to many veterans who have bravely sacrificed for our nation and I am proud that today's announcement will help to ensure they continue to receive quality health care right here in our community," Souder concluded.

The new state-of-the-art Health Care Center (HCC) in Fort Wayne will significantly expand outpatient care on the grounds of the existing campus. The facility will provide primary and specialty care services beyond those the existing hospital offers. It will also offer same-day surgical services. Construction is slated to begin as early as 2011.

The VA has indicated that providing inpatient care in the local community will increase access and reduce travel burdens for many veterans. Souder will continue to work with local veterans and advocate on this issue in Washington as future plans are finalized.

*Continued on next page.*

## **Fort Wayne (continued from last page)**

Dekalb County VSO, Brian Lamm reported:

I just returned from a meeting with Congressman Mark Souder, and Director Spivey-Paul of VA Northern Indiana Health Care.

Congressman Souder announced that the long fought battle about keeping the VA Hospital in Ft Wayne open, is now decided.

Not only will the facility stay open, but a new VA Medical Center will be built on the property. The new facility will be approximately 190,000 square feet, more than twice the size of the 90,000sf facility we have now. Congressman Souder also told us that at 7:30 last night, the Director of Federal VA agreed to allow the Ft Wayne VA to negotiate contracts with our local hospitals to take care of our Veterans locally, rather than requiring them to travel to Indianapolis, or Ann Arbor.

Lastly, he advised us that this project is on the fast track, and the Director VA will be providing the startup funding in this years budget, with a projected completion date of 2012-2014.

From Elkhart County VSO and President of the Indiana Veterans' Service Officers' Association, Gary Whitehead, this e-mail from Congressman Souder:

Dear Gary:

For several years, we've been fighting together to preserve veterans' inpatient health care in Fort Wayne. I am writing to you today to declare that our diligence and determination has paid off.

I am pleased to announce the VA has agreed to build a new state-of-the-art Health Care Center (HCC) on the Fort Wayne campus. The HCC's estimated size of 160,000 to 190,000 square feet is significantly more than the 90,000 square feet of space dedicated directly to outpatient care in Fort Wayne.

Additionally, inpatient care will be provided by partnering with community hospitals like Parkview or Lutheran. According to the Secretary, this would

virtually eliminate medical transfers and travel to the Indianapolis VA medical center.

The existing VA facility will continue to operate through this transition and the VA will continue to explore options for future use of the existing Medical Center. Services will not change. The new HCC will keep existing services and allow for added and enhanced services in many specialty areas.

### **Existing Services:**

- |                          |                             |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| -Inpatient Medical       | -Surgery                    |
| -Primary medical care    | -Primary mental health care |
| -Urgent care             | -Audiology                  |
| -Optometry               | -Diabetic Retinal Imaging   |
| -Urology                 | -Cardiology                 |
| -Dermatology             | -Dental                     |
| -Neurology               | -Nutrition                  |
| -Physical Therapy        | -Podiatry                   |
| -Pharmacy                | -Laboratory                 |
| -Imaging                 | -Pulmonary Function         |
| -Chemotherapy            | -Seamless Transition Spt    |
| -Home Based Primary Care |                             |

### **New Services:**

- o Dialysis
- o Pain Management requiring surgical intervention
- o Specialty services that require prolonged treatment (infectious disease care IV therapy)
- o Otolaryngology
- o Orthopedics
- o Compensation and Pension exams, Registry Exams

### **Enhanced Services:**

- o Expanded Surgical Services (8 new Procedure rooms)
- o Physical, Occupational, Kinesiotherapy
- o Cardiology
- o Oncology
- o Chemotherapy

As we work our way through this transition, I will continue to make sure we provide strong care for our area's veterans. As always, I encourage you to contact me with your thoughts and concerns. Also, I encourage you to visit my Web site at:

*(continued on next page)*

## **Souder e-mail (continued from last page)**

[www.Souder.House.gov](http://www.Souder.House.gov) for up-to-date information about my work for you in the nation's capital.

Sincerely,

Mark Souder  
Member of Congress  
Washington, DC office at: (202) 225-4436.

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### **Medical Journal Praises VA Electronic Health Record. VA Continues to Lead Health Care Industry**

WASHINGTON (April 6, 2009) - A recent study in the prestigious New England Journal of Medicine singles out the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for its successful implementation of a comprehensive system of electronic health records.

The study's authors, led by Dr. Ashish K. Jha of Harvard University, noted that VA's use of electronic health records has significantly enhanced the quality of patient care. They also found that only 1.5 percent of U.S. hospitals have comprehensive electronic health records; adding VA hospitals to the analyses doubled that number.

"VA hospitals have used electronic health records for more than a decade with dramatic associated improvements in clinical quality," the study's authors wrote.

VA clinicians began using computerized patient records in the mid-1990s for everything from recording examinations by doctors to displaying results of lab tests and x-rays. Patient records are available 100 percent of the time to VA health care workers, compared to 60 percent when VA relied on paper records.

Dr. Michael J. Kussman, VA's under secretary for health, said VA has "one of the most comprehensive and sophisticated electronic systems" for patient records in the nation.

"VA's electronic health record system has largely eliminated errors stemming from lost or incomplete medical records, making us one of the safest systems in the health care industry," Kussman said.

The authors of the NEJM article are the latest to praise VA for its technology and commitment to patient safety. In 2006, VA received the prestigious "Innovations in American Government" Award from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government for its advanced electronic health records and performance measurement system.

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### **Birth Certificates for Children Born On Military Installations of Service Personnel**

There has been a recent change in the contact information to obtain birth certificates for the children of U.S. service personnel born overseas in military hospitals.

The birth certificates are held by the U.S. Department of State and the new contact information is as follows:

U.S. Department of State  
Passport & Vital Records  
1111 19<sup>th</sup> Street Suite 510  
Washington, DC 20036

Phone:

1-(877)-487-2778 (press "0")

1-(202)-955-0307

Web site: <http://travel.state.gov>

The fee is \$30.00.

Applicants will need the following information:

Names of both parents

Mother's maiden name

Date of birth of the child

Name and location of the U.S. Military facility on which the child was born

## Former Hancock County Veteran Service Officer Dale E. Kuhn Passes Away

(January 8, 1921 - February 24, 2009)



Dale E. Kuhn, 88, a lifelong resident of Greenfield, passed away Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at Springhurst Health Campus, Greenfield.

He was born January 8, 1921 in Greenfield, Indiana and was the son of the late Walter and Amy (Moose) Kuhn.

Dale was a 1939 graduate of Mt. Comfort high school where he played basketball along with the violin, clarinet and trumpet in the band and orchestra. He was active in 4-H raising calves, hogs and vegetables. Dale served his country in the U.S. Army and was involved in radio communications. He was a member of the Hancock County Voiture 1415, Post 100 AmVets, Hancock County Veterans Service Officer for 15 years, American Legion Post 119, Elks Club of Greenfield, State Commander of Indiana American Legion from 1970-1971, Former Chairman for the Indiana Soldiers and Sailors Home in Knightstown.

He was a lifelong farmer and retired from the United States Postal Service after 30 years as a rural carrier. He was a former member of the Mt. Comfort United Methodist Church. Dale was an avid golfer, bowler and loved to cook for large events at the American Legion.

He is survived by his wife of 68 years, Elizabeth "Babe" (Beaver) Kuhn of Greenfield; son, David Kuhn of Muncie; daughter, Dalene Walker Kuhn of Knightstown; two grandchildren, Carmen Duque and Arielle Smith; two great-grandchildren, Taylor Smith and Sarah Campbell.

Funeral service was held Saturday, February 28, 2009 at Stillinger Family Funeral Home, Pasco Chapel, Greenfield. Military graveside rites provided by the Greenfield Veterans Honor Guard followed at

## Indiana Veterans' Home

### New Computer Lab and Viewing Lounge Opens

The Indiana Veterans' Home (IVH) has expanded computer and video services available to residents with the creation of a computer lab and an individual station viewing lounge for movies and other media. Funding for the equipment was made possible by a Library Service and Technology Act grant through the Indiana State Library.

A room next to the library was renovated to house the Lounge, with tile replacing the worn out carpet and fresh paint helping to create an inviting atmosphere. The space was designed to place computers at one end of the room and the DVD viewing stations at the opposite end, closest to the Library door. Comfortable chairs and tables were repurposed to create a welcoming space.

Paintings of generals from the Revolutionary through the Civil War era, part of the IVH collection of Alexander Lawrie's work, were hung in the Lounge. In order to add a special Indiana touch, the portraits chosen portray individuals who have counties named for them. Alexander Lawrie, part of the Hudson River school, resided at IVH until his death in 1917. The paintings were his bequest to the Indiana Veterans' Home.

To help residents improve their computer and other technology skills, Volunteer Services will have volunteers available to provide one-on-one tutoring and assistance.

With grant funding, IVH was able to purchase new computers and a printer as well as three televisions with DVD players and headphones. Volunteer Services provided two additional computers and printers. New tile for the space was made possible through donations to the Indiana Veterans Home.



## Missing WWII Soldiers are Identified

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that the remains of two U.S. servicemen, missing from World War II, have been identified and will be returned to their families for burial with full military honors.

They are Pfc. Julian H. Rogers, of Bloomington, Ind, and Pvt. Henry E. Marquez, of Kansas City, Kan. Both men were U.S. Army. Rogers will be buried in the spring in Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C., and Marquez will be buried on May 30 in Kansas City, Mo.

Representatives from the Army's Mortuary Office met with the next-of-kin of these men in their hometowns to explain the recovery and identification process and to coordinate interment with military honors on behalf of the Secretary of the Army.

In November 1944, the 112<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 28<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, was attacking east through the Hürtgen Forest in an attempt to capture the German towns of Vossenack and Schmidt. On Nov. 4, the Germans counterattacked in what would become one of the longest running battles in U.S. history. Rogers and Marquez, both members of G Company, 112<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, were reported killed in action near Vossenack on Nov. 4. Their bodies were not recovered.

In 2007, a German citizen searching for wartime relics in the Hürtgen Forest uncovered human remains and military identification tags for Rogers and Marquez. He notified U.S. officials and a Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) team excavated the site later that year. The team recovered human remains and non-biological material.

Among dental records, other forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists from JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory also used mitochondria DNA in the identification of the remains.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans,

visit the DPMO Web site at <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo> or call (703) 699-1420.

U.S. Department of Defense Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs)

On the Web: <http://www.defenselink.mil/Releases/>

Media Contact: +1 (703) 697-5131/697-5132

PublicContact:<http://www.defenselink.mil/faq/comm ent.html> or +1 (703) 428-0711 +1

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## State Approving Agency (SAA) News

### Chapter 33 – Post 9/11 Updates

As the eligible veteran community approaches the August 1, 2009 deadline IDVA and the State Approving Agency (SAA) are receiving many calls about the new educational entitlement, here are some new updates.

The Post-9/11 GI Bill is for individuals with at least 90 days of aggregate service on or after September 11, 2001, or individuals discharged with a service-connected disability after 30 days. You must have received an honorable discharge to be eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill. The Post-9/11 GI Bill will become effective for training on or after August 1, 2009. This program will pay eligible individuals:

- tuition & fees directly to the school not to exceed the maximum in-state tuition & fees at a public Institution of Higher Learning.
- a monthly housing allowance based on the Basic Allowance for Housing for an E-5 with dependents at the location of the school.
- an annual books & supplies stipend of \$1,000 paid proportionately based on enrollment
- a one-time rural benefit payment for eligible individuals.

The Post 9/11 GI Bill is payable only for training at an Institution of Higher Learning (IHL), which is, generally, an accredited college or university. It is not



paid for students at Non-College Degree (NCD), On-The-Job Training or Apprenticeship Training facilities. If you are enrolled exclusively in online training, or still in the military, you will not receive the housing allowance or books & supplies stipend. This benefit provides up to 36 months of education benefits, generally benefits are payable for 15 years following your release from active duty. For more information about this or other VA education benefit programs, please visit [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov), or call the VA Education Service National Call Center at 1-888-442-4551.

Also recently posted to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs web page is a comparison link between the Post 9/11 GI Bill and other VA educational benefits. The link provides an excellent "side by side" comparison for those veterans who may have entitlements under more than one Chapter.

VA published the final regulations in the FEDERAL REGISTER on March 31, 2009. The final regulations establish provisions for the Post-9/11 GI Bill (or Chapter 33), the educational assistance program authorized by the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008.

Look for more updates on Chapter 33 as we get closer to the August 1<sup>st</sup> deadline by visiting [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov)

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## **Phyllis Funk, WWII US Army Nurse Honored by the State of Indiana**



A SENATE RESOLUTION honoring the life and service of Phyllis Rowe Funk.

*Whereas, Phyllis Rowe Funk was born in 1921 in Corydon, Indiana, Indiana's first State Capitol. She graduated from high school and went on to Nurse's training in Louisville, Kentucky, at Norton's Infirmary, now known as University of Louisville School of Nursing;*

*Whereas, After graduating from nursing school, Phyllis joined the Army on November 1, 1943. The*

*Allies fighting World War II needed Phyllis' medical expertise. She was told to report to Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indianapolis. There, she met Capt. Alva R. Funk, M.P., also from Corydon. They were married on December 18, 1943 after being transferred to White Sulfur Springs, West Virginia ;*

*Whereas, Two weeks after being married, Lieutenant Phyllis Funk traveled on the Queen Mary from Scotland to England in February, 1944. In England, she joined her hospital unit, the 35th Evacuation Hospital, attached to the 3rd Army;*

*Whereas, Five months later, under the command of General George Patton, Phyllis landed on the Beaches of Normandy, D- Day + 12. From June 17, 1944, until October 17, 1945, she cared for wounded soldiers, sometimes finding herself behind enemy lines. She served in the 35th Evac. Hospital, supporting the 3rd Army, in France, Germany, Luxembourg, and Austria;*

*Whereas, In October, 1945, Phyllis was flown out of Austria to Berlin, leaving Europe by ship for the United States. After 22 months at war, she was reunited with her husband; and*

*Whereas, Phyllis and Alva were married 53 years before his death. They had four girls, five grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren, all while Phyllis followed her profession as a registered nurse, working continuously for over fifty years. Now 87 years old, she enjoys her family and friends, and is always asked to retell the stories of World War II:*

*Therefore, be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the State of Indiana.*



*Phyllis with Senator Brent Waltz and her family at the Senate. IDVA's Jewel Brammann, third from left, is her daughter.*

# Staying Connected During Deployment

## A Retreat for the Families of Deployed Service Members

Thursday, June 25th - Sunday, June 28th

**"When a service member deploys, the whole family deploys with him or her."**

***The challenges family members face during their loved one's deployment are intense and unique. Managing separation, communication, parenting, employment, marital concerns, and financial issues; are just some of these challenges. Children and teenagers alike can find this period extremely stressful. Many families do not live in near other deployed families; and social support can be in short supply.***

**Join other family members living with deployed service members to support one another, share stories and experiences, learn to manage stress with self-care and constructive coping skills.**

***The Coming Home Project invites OIF and OEF family members with deployed loved ones to relax, restore, and reconnect with yourself and with other families who share your experience.***

**Who is eligible? All families who will have a deployed service member at the time of the retreat.**

**What does the retreat cost? This program is completely free. There is no cost for lodging, meals, workshops, or air travel.**

**For more information and to apply: [www.cominghomeproject.net](http://www.cominghomeproject.net)**

***Applications will be accepted until May 29th, 2009.***

## End-of-Month Filing of VA Claims

***A message for veterans' service officers  
from The American Legion's John Hickey***

After granted, VA often begins payment of benefit claims effective from the first day of the month following the month the VA regional office receives the claim. Many Veterans Service Officers are very well aware of this fact, and do a good job getting last minute claims filed before the end of the month.

The American Legion Department Service Office often receives an extraordinary number of claims on either the last day of the month, or the last business day of the month when the end-of-the-month falls on a weekend. The volume of these last day claims can make it impossible to process them through our office by the end of VA's business day.



Of course, American Legion Department Service Officers prefer reviewing claims prior to filing them with VA, but we don't want anyone to lose benefits because of a claim being filed too late. **If, therefore, you must file a VA claim on the last business day of the month, please fax it directly to the VA Regional Office at: 317-226-5178. This will set the effective date. Please then mail us the hard copy of the claim to supply to VA and record in our records.**

# **Patriot Guard Riders at Honor Hoosier Homecoming Celebration**

JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS-INDIANA  
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
2002 SOUTH HOLT ROAD  
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46241-4839  
317-247-3222

**For Immediate Release: Jan. 31, 2009**

For more information about the Welcome Home Celebration contact: Sgt. Maj. Jodie Newby, 317-416-0724 or Lt. Col. Deedra Thombleson, 317-407-7065

**Release #: 01312009-02**

By Staff Sgt. Patrick Cloward 120th Public Affairs Detachment

As part of their thanks to service men and women for their time and dedication, members of the Patriot Guard Riders participated in homecoming ceremonies for Air and Army Guard units at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis.

More than 100 volunteers consisting of prior service military and civilians walked the perimeter of the field carrying the U.S. Colors before standing guard as more than 3,100 men and women marched in review for the event.

"It puts closure to 38 years of nightmares of 'Nam' for me," said Lloyd Valentine of Fairland, Ind., who says he volunteers regularly. "Doing this allowed me to come out and help bring closure to the faces I see every day of those I served with." Valentine says attending the events with the Patriot Riders gives him the opportunity to send other servicemembers off with honor and bring them home with the respect they deserve.

It all started back in early August of 2005 with the American Legion Riders chapter 136 from Kansas. Members said they were appalled to hear that a fallen hero's memory was being tarnished by misguided religious zealots who were protesting at funerals. They decided to do something about it. They formed

a committee to strategize and form a battle plan to combat Fred Phelps and the Westboro Baptist Church.

When they heard that the church was going to protest at the funeral of Sgt. John Doles in Chelsea, Okla., they established a mission statement, which included getting the family's permission and contacting law enforcement and other motorcycle groups in Oklahoma. They agreed that their ultimate goal was to get veterans and motorcycle organizations in every state involved so they could handle the situation internally and not rely on other states to do the job. They were very successful in mustering riders to honor Sgt. Doles and limiting the intrusion by the church.

Following the missions in South Haven, Kan. and a later ride in Edmond, Okla., Jeff "Twister" Brown, from Broken Arrow, Okla., decided to do more than just ride. He saw a need to get a strong nationwide communications and recruiting program in place. He contacted the original American Legion riders in Kansas and told them of his plans. They openly shared their experiences, suggestions and encouragement. Within a matter of days, Brown had formed the Patriot Guard Riders and began a nationwide campaign to garner support.

The growth has been phenomenal. Within a week their membership included many riders from associations like the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, Rolling Thunder, ABATE, Combat Vets Motorcycle Association, Intruder Alert, Leathernecks Motorcycle Club, and almost 500 individual riders. A great deal of credit goes to that small group of Kansas American Legion Riders, but none of this could have ever been accomplished without the patriot member who takes time out of their life to honor fallen Airmen and Soldiers with their families, like Damon Gastineau of Avon, Ind., who also came to Lucas Oil Stadium to volunteer. "I'm not in the military but I work with law enforcement at the police academy in Plainfield," he said. "I think it's the right thing to do, to thank them."

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# **2009 IDVA Annual CVSO Training Conference Tentative Schedule**

CVSOs,

The IDVA Annual Conference is scheduled for 1 - 4 June 2009 at the Marriott Inn – East. Although the agenda is still in development I have included it for your reference, but bear in mind that there will be changes and not everyone who is listed has actually been coordinated with.

Ray Baker (SAA) has arranged for the annual golf outing which will be at the Pleasant Run Golf Course as it was last year. You will get further information on it from Ray.

## **IDVA Annual Conference**

June 1-4 June 2009

Marriott Inn – East

7202 East 21<sup>st</sup> Street

Indianapolis, IN 46219

Toll-free number for reservations is 1-800-228-9290

### **Tentative Agenda**

#### **Monday, 1 June 2009**

1:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Registration in Atrium

10:00a.m.

(tee off time) Golf Outing Pleasant Run Golf Course.  
Golfers only required.

6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

CVSO Reception - Marriott Inn-East  
CVSO's, spouses, IDVA staff, other interested individuals. Refreshments provided. Cash bar.

#### **Tuesday, 2 June 2009**

7:00a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Registration in Atrium

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

General Session IDVA Conference

9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Introductions

Director's Update

Tom Applegate

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

IDVA/SAA/IVMC/IVH Update

Kris, Ron, Jewel, Alan, Julia

10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Break

10:45 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

VA Regional Office Updates

Beth McCoy

11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Employer Support of the Guard/Reserve

Doug Gibbon/Roger Peterman

12:00 noon – 1:30 p.m.

Lunch

1:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Rx Indiana – Marchelle Burke – Eli Lilly

2:00 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.

Living Wills/POA for Health Care

Tim Maley – Roudebush

2:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Break

3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Property Tax Deductions

Department of Local Government Finance -

4:00 p.m. -

Indiana Veterans' Service Officers'  
Association Meeting

5:00 p.m. –

Roudebush Focus Group

Tim Maley

Hospitality Room

6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Hospitality Room Salons D & E

#### **Wednesday, 3 June 2009**

8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

New Service Officer Training

All new service officers hired  
by the county since June of 2008



8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
CVSO Training by Veterans' Service Organizations

6:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.  
IDVA Banquet – cash bar – speaker

**Thursday, 4 June 2009**

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Test - Dismissal

#### NOTES:

No Registration fees will be charged for the Conference. IDVA will provide snacks for the Monday night Reception. There will be a cash bar. Hospitality Room will serve refreshments and soft drinks during specified period on Tuesday.

Wednesday night banquet will be free of charge except for the cash bar.

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## Marion County Veterans' Service Officer Soon to Become a Reality?

IDVA Director, Tom Applegate, and State Service Officer, Kris Bertrand, began talks last month with Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard's Director of Minority Business Development, Greg Wilson, about the possibility of a Veterans' Service Officer for Marion County (Indianapolis).

In a subsequent meeting with Mr. Wilson last week (Thursday, April 30th), Greg reported that he had spoken with the Mayor and got the green light to proceed. He will be meeting with the council and with budget and will be encouraging them to put enough money in next year's budget to allow for, not just one, but two service officers.

We are very encouraged by this and hope Greg is able secure this long-overdue service for Marion County veterans.

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## The Indiana Operation Enduring Freedom/ Operation Iraqi Freedom Memorial Wall

**Indiana has sustained the following  
casualties since the last Update**



U.S. Army Sergeant Ezra Dawson, 31, Las Vegas, NV. Mother resides in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Died on January 17, 2009, in Konar province, Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, when his Chinook crashed as a result of rocket-propelled grenade and small arms fire. Specialist Dawson was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, Fort Hood, Texas.

His mother resides in Indianapolis, Indiana.



United States Army Corporal Zachary R. Nordmeyer, 21, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Died on February 23, 2009, in Balad, Iraq, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Injuries sustained when his dismounted patrol received small arms fire. Assigned to the 5th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, Fort Wainwright, Alaska.

He graduated in 2007 from Ben Davis High School.



United States Marine Corps Corporal Donte Jamal Whitworth, 21, Noblesville, Indiana.

Died 28 February 2009 in a traffic accident near Al Taquddum Air Base, about 50 miles west of Baghdad. He was a 2005 graduate of Noblesville High School, and commanded supply convoys hauling goods between U.S. military bases in Iraq, assigned to Combat Logistics Regiment 15, 1st Marine Logistics Group, Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, AZ.



**U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Gary Lee Woods, Jr., 24, of Lebanon Junction, KY. Mother and stepfather, reside in Indianapolis, IN.**

Died April 10, 2009 in Mosul, Iraq. He was a member of the Alpha Company 1st Battalion 67th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division.

IN DEDICATION TO  
JON BRINKLEY  
THE INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
WILL HOST

JON BRINKLEY MEMORIAL GOLF  
OPEN

DATE: MONDAY – JUNE 1<sup>ST</sup> 2009

LOCATION: PLEASANT RUN GOLF COURSE  
601 N. ARLINGTON AVE. INDIANAPOLIS, IN. 46219

TEE TIME: 10:00 A.M. (FIRM)

REGISTRATION WILL START AT 9:00 A.M.

ENTRY FEES \$28.00 GREEN FEES AND ONE HALF GOLF CART.

GREEN FEES TO BE PAID TO THE COURSE

SPONSORED BY: AMERICAN LEGION, DAV, VFW. DWD.

OPEN TO ALL CONFERENCE ATTENDEES AND GUESTS

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PLEASE SEND REGISTRATION AND TEAM LISTING TO  
INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
ATTN: RAY BAKER or FRED MAJOR  
302 WEST WASHINGTON ST. RM. E-120  
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46204-2738

YES I WOULD LIKE TO PLAY IN THE IDVA OPEN ON June 1<sup>ST</sup>, 2009 \_\_\_\_  
(SEND NO MONEY, PAY AT THE COURSE)

ENTRANTS NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ENTRANTS ADDR: \_\_\_\_\_

REPRESENTING: \_\_\_\_\_

EACH ENTRANT MUST SUBMIT AN ENTRY. PLEASE REPRODUCE THIS FORM FOR ANY GUESTS.  
RETURN FORMS NO LATER THAN MAY 15TH 2009 THIS WILL HELP TO CONFIRM ALL PLAYERS AND  
COURSE SET UP.



## Director's Comments

### Jon Brinkley

I'm writing this on April 29th, exactly three months after Jon's death, and I still miss him every day. He was my "go to" guy for any historical data I needed about IDVA or about veterans' benefits in the State of Indiana. He had all the knowledge in his head.

More importantly, I just miss having him around. He had a dry sense of humor that wasn't always apparent to everyone, and when he smiled he was a completely different person.

We had a couple of rough spots in our relationship, but we got over those and I feel like we were friends. His picture hangs outside his office and will stay there for as long as I'm the Director, and I'm sure as long as Marcia Hines and Kris Bertrand are there after I'm no longer at IDVA.

### IDVA Annual Conference

As of this writing we have yet to line up a speaker for the banquet, but I know we'll find someone who will be knowledgeable and will keep the CVSOs entertained.

By now you have received either my e-mail or my letter with instructions about how to register your attendance with Jewel. We've already had responses from 16 CVSOs or assistants that they will attend and have also had 5 responses from other interested individuals who registered online.

### IDVA Fall Conference

The Fall Conference will be conducted at Pokagon State Park, Angola, Indiana, on Friday, October 30th, at the Potawatomi Inn. Details will be provided at the Annual Conference.

## Legislation

So far this session the Governor has signed two pieces of legislation affecting Hoosier veterans.

**\*\*** On April 4, 2009 the Governor signed House Enrolled Act 1258 (IC 9-18-17 & 9-18-18). A veteran with a former Prisoner of War license plate is not subject to pay for metered parking and cannot be ticketed for parking for longer than permitted at a metered parking space.

**\*\*** On April 16, 2009 the Governor signed HEA 1107 (IC 20-38-13). Establishes an Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children which ensures the prompt transfer of records and credits whenever the child of active duty personnel or Guard and Reserve members on Title 10 orders are transferred from one state to another and allows the child to be placed in the same grade or next higher, when appropriate.

On April 30th the Governor signed House Bill 1135. The bill affects Indiana Codes 10-17-12 (Military Family Relief Fund [MFRF]) and 10-17-13 (Veterans' Affairs Trust Fund [VATF]). The bill extends the opportunity for grants to certain members of the active military and extends the window of opportunity for grants out to one year instead of 6 months after their return from deployments. It establishes that the MFRF is for use only during times of war or national conflicts and that the VATF is established to provide a self-sustaining funding source for the MFRF.

Senate Enrolled Act 356, signed on April 30th, expands Indiana's Military Family Leave Act to include adoptive parents, foster parents and step-grandchildren.

We're also looking at Senate Bill 39 which would remove the restriction that a Purple Heart recipient must have received the medal after 9/10/01 to be eligible for the Indiana Remission of Fees program. If signed, all Purple Heart recipients would be eligible.



**Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs  
302 W. Washington Street E-120  
Indianapolis, IN 46204**